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respect to said inside circumference, and wherein said support ring is surrounded by said elastomer on said outer circumference where said raised portion is absent.

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**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the above identified patent application is hereby respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks. New claim 5 has been added. Claims 1 and 2 and 4 and 5 remain in the case.

The applicant appreciates the thoroughness of the review by Examiner Tho Dac Ta.

A petition and Fee for Extension of Time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and payment thereof for a 3 month extension is attached hereto.

A Request for Continued Examination and payment thereof is attached hereto.

1-5. Claims 1, 2, and 4 were rejected under 35 USC 103 under Werner et al and in view of Bissi et al.

In Office Action, item 3, the Examiner contends that the applicants have not disclosed that having the raised portion at this specific location solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose, and that the device would perform as well without the raised portion.

This is not true. Were it not for the raised portion to align the ring during the molding process it would shift. Accordingly it is impossible to embed the ring in the elastomer. Either the inside or the outside circumference will be exposed, as is the case with all prior art devices. This then permits the ring to loosen and become dislodged during use. This results in a loss of the environmental seal and failure of the connector.

With regard to Bissi et al., it is again impossible to ensure that the ring [7] will be properly aligned and surrounded if the molded elastomer [6, 8, 9] were to surround it. Accordingly, a separate not-molded portion [5] must be used. As Bissi et al. does not rely upon the inventive raised portion, it is impossible to surround the ring [7] of Bissi et al. in an elastomer sufficient to prevent its removal. Portion [5] must be added after the ring [7] has been formed or inserted and therefore, the ring

[7] can be removed by first removing portion [5].

Accordingly, Bissi et al fails to provide the instant benefit of retaining a ring [7] so that it can be surrounded by elastomer on all sides. The left side of Bissi et al. proximate portion [5] is not and cannot be surrounded by the continuous elastomer.

6. The Examiner notes that the specification only discloses one reason/benefit to the raised portion.

Concurrent with submission of this Amendment After Final and a Request for Continued Examination, the specification has been amended to recite additional benefits provided specifically by the raised portion.

These benefits are consistent with the initial disclosure. No new matter is included nor are any new issues raised. The original structure and a disclosure thereof is fully relied upon to satisfy the original objectives of the invention. Only a further clarification as to how they are accomplished by the original disclosure is included and also a brief explanation as to why the prior art fails to adequately do so.

Accordingly, please enter the amendment to the specification. Then please consider the merit of the remarks as contained in the amended specification as to the benefits provided by the raised portion. Please also refer to the previous Amendment that was filed which also summarizes some of these benefits. This is not repeated for purpose of brevity. However, these prior comments are now believed to be germane as they are included in the instant specification.

New claim 5 has been added. Payment for this independent claim is also included. Claim 5 recites additional structure for surrounding the outer and inner circumferences by the elastomer and is believed to be in condition of allowance.

Accordingly, the rejection of remaining claims 1, 2, and 4 is believed to be overcome and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

New claim 5 is believed to be in condition of allowance and consideration is respectfully requested.

As all remaining claims 1, 2, and 4, 5 appear to be in condition of allowance, reconsideration thereof is

respectfully requested, and a notice of allowance is  
courteously urged at the earliest time.

7-8. The final rejection is noted as are the contact  
telephone numbers.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Risto A. Rinne, Jr.", followed by the date "5/19/03" written vertically to the right of the signature.

Risto A. Rinne, Jr.

2173 East Francisco Blvd.  
Suite E  
San Rafael, CA 94901

1-415-457-6933